FREE

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TYCI

CN LESTER

Ciara Maguire interviews the musician, writer and activist to coincide with the release of her new album, Aether

TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR MUSICAL BACKGROUND.

My parents raised me on a steady diet of David Bowie, Leonard Cohen and Lou Reed - I suspect there was a fair amount of rebellion in my desire to train as a classical musician? I started at six on the piano, went on to do my BMus and MMus in performance and composition, train as a classical singer and concentrate my research work in music psychology and gender / sexual dissidence in music history… I started playing piano and singing in a band - and kind of wound up as a singer-songwriter. Opera by day, alternative by night…

YOU ALSO CURATE TRANSPOSE. COULD YOU TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT AND WHAT IT INVOLVES?

It's a semi-regular night to showcase trans (and trans-supporting) artists of all kinds, and to raise funds for LGBTI charities. Our last show was at Tate Modern, we've featured film makers, rock bands, photographers, performance poets, erotic storytelling - it's always a varied line-up, and there are only two rules: "Don't make assumptions" and "Don't be a dick".

WHO ARE YOUR MAIN INFLUENCES?

This is always a bugger of a question to answer. I could give you a list of musicians I'd like to count as influences, but I'm not so sure that they're the only ones. R.E.M. and Patti Smith are conscious role models, and the musicians I always end up returning to - but I suspect that a childhood of listening to Dire Straits on repeat has left quite a mark.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING GENDERQUEER IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY? ARE PEOPLE GENERALLY ACCEPTING OR HAS IT BEEN A CHALLENGE?

Oh, god - this is where I try to craft a diplomatic response! The majority of people don't necessarily understand at first, but take the time to listen and give it a go. Some people are absolutely brilliant, and supportive in ways I wouldn't have expected. And, inevitably, there are those who are awful - a mixture of outright hatred, dismissal… It's always a challenge to present yourself honestly in a world that rarely acknowledges that truth - but I don't think I could do it any other way.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE ON CN'S WORK, GO TO CN-LESTER.COM.

YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN DEPRESSION

A feature on mental health by Gretchen King.

So, you're feeling down. Life's challenges have left you baffled and bruised? Take a moment to remember those reassuring words of Carole King: You've Got A Friend… One who sticks by your side, especially at the worst of times. One who gives you advice, even when you don't ask for it.

She Is Depression.

Just as some friends can lack tact at giving advice in difficult situations, so does Depression. She may say all the wrong things, but her intentions are much more kind than the harsh delivery of her words. And although Depression's timing feels inconvenient, I actually believe her to have excellent timing... Because as soon as she enters the room, it's our cue to stop and listen. It's time for a change.

Depression is like a toddler who can only communicate their needs through a limited vocabulary. If you've spent any time with a baby, you'll know that often the only way they communicate is through a barrage of tears. When we cannot understand their needs, they will become even more frustrated and cry louder.

Depression hasn't learned the right words to express herself. You can teach her, but first you need to understand how she communicates.

When Depression begins to deliver statements like: "Nobody loves me" or "I wish they weren't so demanding of me" or "Why doesn't he / she show me more affection? Am I not worth it?", look at what Depression is genuinely trying to tell you.

"Nobody loves me" is telling us "I need to work on loving myself."

"I wish they weren't so demanding of me" turns into "I need to establish my boundaries. Here are the things I am ok with, and here are some things that I will not do for them."

"Why doesn't he / she show me more affection? Am I not worth it?" becomes "How does he show me that he cares in his own way? How can I explain to him the ways that make me feel loved. How can I learn to value myself even when feeling rejected?"

With a little patience and a new method of understanding, you can teach her a better way of communicating. You can turn depressive thoughts into healthy requests that will positively change yourself forever.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE OF GRETCHEN'S WORK, HEAD TO GRETCHENKING.COM.

double trouble

New TYCI contributor Penny Anderson shares her thoughts about ageing gracefully in an often ungraceful world – for women, at least.

I didn't die before I got older. Instead I had the temerity to keep on keeping on, and can still be found 'staying alive…' I suffer from the double curse of being both of a certain age and female, and I'm never entirely sure which one of those 'afflictions' causes me the most difficulty. Older women (and I am older, not elderly) endure a double trial.

First of all it is widely assumed that I am, well, dotty. Slightly… you know - barmy. Forgetful. Inept and adrift in the modern world…

I'm not constantly in a righteous froth about everything contemporary life presents me with. You'd never think it, but the most consistently socially liberal group is - yes, older women. Which is odd, because for years we were denied the vote because The Liberal Party assumed we would vote against them, since they assumed women were inherently Conservative in every which way.

From my own experience, the biggest obstacle to our collective sanity and well-being are certain younger men. One male acquaintance feels compelled to remind me that I am older, by the subtle method of blurting out, "You're old" whenever he remembers. Another has introduced me as, "This is Penny - she's old," to a visiting female A&R rep (I used to do A&R myself. Maybe he felt threatened. Like I care...).

I have explained to both offenders that it's not like I am trying to sneak under the wire, but still they repeat

how sad and old I am, the worst example explaining that he does the same to his mother, a woman I pity. Eventually I screamed at him, "I'm not your fucking mother." Oh - they also wince when I swear, which is frequently.

This outrage of theirs is linked to their horror of any trace of sexuality in mature women. We mustn't do 'it'. We must never talk about 'it'. Once more, it's their idea that we could be their mum; I suspect the culture of MILFs and 'cougars' (oh, how I despise both terms) is the root cause of this, redefined us as predatory and thereby further undermining us while making us objects of ridicule.

It's true that I take some consolation whenever these younger men find their stupid, cruel prejudice biting them viciously on the arse. I now console one now reaching the age I was when they first taunted me (NB: I'm still not that old…) because he's now the oldest worker in his edgy social media workplace and is being taunted in return, simply for being older and for losing his hair.

While I'm here ranting I'm tired of the preconceptions that I need 'modern' music explained to me. I used to be music journalist, dammit, and those boys are the reason I've taken to embarrassing myself by announcing how I used to write for The NME like veterans reminiscing about the war they fought in.
So I am either being discriminated against, or patronised - usually both at the same time. All people see is someone older; rarely a woman who - if not wiser - is at least more experienced…

I want to age disgracefully, albeit with dignity. I'm not clinging to my fleeting youth, or panicking. Quite simple I just…am. I don't wake up every morning with thoughts of impending death. I just carry on. I don't shop with the aim on dressing age appropriately or not: I just shop…

Most of all, I am living my life - I still enjoy the world. I do not play bingo, neither am I dotty, prudish or decrepit, so please don't write me off. We've survived watching men of our generation choose women half their age. We've witnessed these same men retain their jobs and become 'distinguished' while we are, like the heroic Miriam O'Reilly who sued the BBC and won, expected to roll over and accept redundancy in every sense of the word.

Older women are more likely than younger women, older and younger men to be made redundant, then mocked when we try to start our lives over again, discriminated against when we apply for new jobs and even demoted. We're paid less, passed over for promotion, demeaned, patronised and belittled. One day you will be me so let's hope life for older women has improved by then. We fought to not be referred as girls and now here's the next battle: we must also struggle not to be called biddy, battleaxe or grandma when we dare to reach thirty or forty and carry on living.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, GO TO TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE OF PENNY'S WORK, VISIT HER AWARD-WINNING BLOG, RENTERGIRL.BLOGSPOT.CO.UK.

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Halina Rifai speaks to Fiona McNab, the lady behind Edinburgh-based studio, Tape.

How long have you been planning and involved in Tape?

I think it has been about six years at least in the planning. It all started when I was at Chamber Studio recording synths and the engineer there, Stephen Watkins, and I totally clicked as friends. He shared my feelings about the male orientation of the music industry and how going into studios could often not be the most comfortable experience for women, they seem to always have the same yukky toilets! So we thought, "Wouldn't it be nice to have toilets that girls liked using..." Helpfully, we also shared a passion for music, style and old studio gear. Our wee idea just grew bigger and bigger from there as we added to our vintage gear collection and searched for premises.

Who are the team behind the studio?

There is Stephen, Greg, Callum, Gareth and myself. Stephen is my studio partner - he is a producer and mix engineer. His brain is wired for producing - he lives and breathes it and has done his whole adult life. He is a self-proclaimed feminist and wears Harris tweed suits with steampunk pieces he finds from Japan. He doubles up as a psychotherapist for bands when they are recording. Greg and Callum are our in-house engineers. They work as a team, bouncing ideas off each other for ways of creating new sounds and improving editing techniques, as well as taking gear apart and refurbing other pieces. Gareth works in the office with me, he is the studio manager and looks after bookings, the studios diaries and general problem

solving. He has a PR and events background, and also looks after our social media and any press. I deal with all the other admin, accounts, payroll, invoicing, payments and, having been responsible for the business ethos and style, I also tend to be the overall decision maker when it comes to the business end.

What have been your proudest achievements to date?

There are two things I am very proud of, one being that Tape actually exists! I really enjoyed the build and design process but it was also incredibly stressful. Looking back I think it took more out of me than I realised at the time. However, I learnt so much from doing it and I think it is really important to challenge yourself. The second thing I'm proud of is the Tape team. I'm proud that I put together a group of people that all behave respectfully towards each other and are working towards a similar goal. No one sees themselves at more important than the team and we all have our own unique skills and roles within the studio.

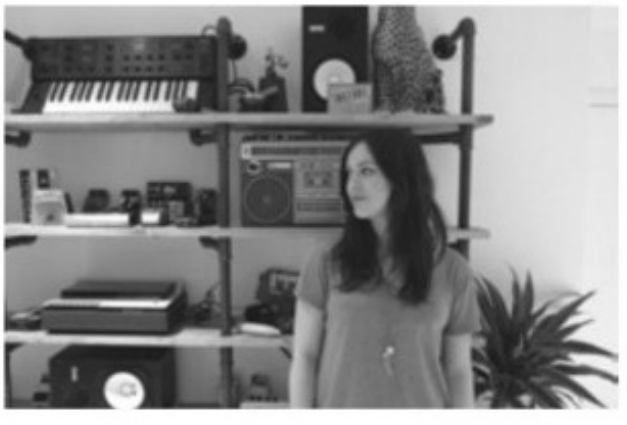
Have you faced any sexism in the industry? Having come from a music technology background myself, I admit that sound production is a very male-dominated industry. Has being female helped in any way?

I have never faced any particularly bad sexism, but there is always a minority of men who like to tell me how I should be running the studio or building it, or 'testing' my knowledge - trying to see if I'm worthy of my job. There is also a look of surprise on people's faces when they realise that I own a studio, they often assume it belongs to my boyfriend and on occasion, even after he has explained that it's mine, they still talk to him about the gear and ask him questions! I think it's great being a female in a male-dominated industry though. The majority of men that I come across tell me they think its cool that a girl built and runs a studio - and don't see it as shocking or assume that I know nothing.

If you could give any advice to women wanting to pursue a career in this industry what would you say?

Just be you. Be confident in your strengths, skills and knowledge. And remember that there are many ways to be part of the industry and the greater creative community, from admin and marketing work, to production and management, to being Beyonce.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TAPE, HEAD TO TAPESTUDIO.COM.



5 LESBIAN POWER COUPLES

For the latest in the Five Things series, Ciara Maguire writes about lady couples who rock her world.

In a world still fairly lacking positive and visible representation of lesbians, the importance of having badass, successful role models in the public eye can't be understated. I was first introduced to the notion of lesbian 'power couples' in an outdated and vaguely offensive Sex and the City episode a good few years ago, but since then my eyes have been opened to all the incredibly cool and inspiring out women who leave me persuading my girlfriend that wearing matching pastel power suits and briefcases is a GREAT idea. Here's a list of some of my faves to leave you equally inspired.

1. ELLEN DEGENERES AND PORTIA DE ROSSI

The so-called first ladies of lesbianism, it's hard to think 'lesbian power couple' without Ellen and Portia springing to mind. Probably the most visible and accepted couple in the public eye, Ellen and Portia show that it is possible to be successful, popular AND gay. Ellen came out in a time where it was even more of a huge deal than it is today, and despite her career crashing for a few years as a result, she managed to bring it back and launch her own talk show which has been running for over ten years. Portia is also a successful actress, and in 2010 published her memoirs, discussing her struggle with eating disorders and how she overcame them. Both of these women are hugely inspirational, and an example that lesbian relationships can have staying power and stability.

2. RAVEN SYMONE AND AZMARIE LIVINGSTONE

When Raven Symone came out last year, thousands of 'That's So Raven' fans were devastated, proclaiming their childhoods had been ruined. I was not one of these people- rather, I

gleefully rewatched old episodes on YouTube, smug with the knowledge than one of the funniest and coolest 00s stars was a giant homo. This smugness only increased when it was revealed that Raven was dating AzMarie Livingstone, a ridiculously cool fashion model/America's Next Top Model contestant. This couple are the stuff dreams are made of.

3. BETTE PORTER AND TINA KINNARD

Okay, so they may be fictional but let's face it- they're the archetype lesbian power couple. Bette spends her days as a curator for the California Art Centre shouting and making important decisions, whilst Tina is a high flying movie producer. And they still have time to make and look after a tiny baby human. Amazing. Granted, most of their relationship is spent arguing, cheating and struggling to stay on top (power wise, obviously) but they both look excellent in a suit and hold their own in male dominated industries. YAY LESBIAN FEMINISM.

4. JODIE FOSTER AND ALEXANDRA HEDISON

I first heard of the recent marriage of Jodie and Alexandra whilst briefly checking my Facebook on a night out in Polo (no judgin'), only to find a flurry of notifications informing me 'JODIE FOSTER IS MARRIED TO DYLAN OFF THE L WORD'. While Alexandra is mostly known amongst me and my friends for playing the devious Dylan in The L Word, she is in fact an established photographer and filmmaker. We can only hope Alexandra isn't using Jodie for her wealth and connections so she can make edgy, low budget documentaries (another L Word reference, sorry) (but seriously, you should watch it) and that this blissful union will only serve to cement their power couple status.

5. CLAUDE CAHUN AND MARCEL MOORE

Taking a trip back in time for this pair, Claude and Marcel were together for more than 40 years from the early 1920s onwards and were pretty fucking badass throughout that time. Feminists and artists, Claude's photography explored concepts of sexuality and gender, including androgynous and butch identities which was revolutionary for the time. During the Second World War, they became anti-Nazi activists, and would dress in disguise to go to German Military events and secretly distribute anti-Nazi flyers- it took a long time for them to be found out, as no-one would have suspected it was a couple of middle aged lesbian artists. Sadly they were caught and arrested in 1944, and while they were released Claude died ten years later. The couple are buried together in Jersey, and their legacy still lives on, with a film exploring Claude's work being released just last year (Magic Mirror, Sarah Pucill).

FOR MORE IN OUR FIVE THINGS SERIES, HEAD TO TYCI.ORG.UK.

FANGIRLING OVER FEMINISTS

New TYCI contributor Nellie Gayle discusses women in music and their use of the tag 'feminist'.

Like most people, my Google auto-search will reveal slightly more than I would like it to about my neuroses and obsessions. Lately, all I have to do is type a single letter and the friendly Google will provide a helpful hint - 'A' prompts 'Amy Winehouse feminist,' 'K' populates 'Kate Nash feminist,' and 'L' will suggest 'Lykke Li feminist.' In the past few months, I have exhausted these search terms, swapping in the names of whatever artist I'm currently obsessed with in an effort to mine information about their statuses on women's rights and equality. Given that reading music blogs and listening to indie radio is my preferred method of procrastination, trust me when I say that I probably know the feminism status of most of your favorite artists too.

In my spare time (or whenever I'm pretending to do work), I run a fanblog for Haim. The fierce sibling triumvirate has quickly occupied my top spot for favorite band… Este, Alana and Danielle represent something unique from the other artists I fangirled over in the past. Watching and reading interviews and live performances made me realize that they embody the term I was most preoccupied with emulating myself - female badassery…

My love for music and my passion for feminism always manage to intersect in some ways, but generally in areas that cause more discomfort than happiness. Being a critical fan of an artist is difficult at times - how can you appreciate and truly love an artist if their lyrics and video concepts benefit from casual sexism and misogyny? By observing the various Tumblr and Twitter conversations that have coalesced around the themes of music and feminism, I've come to the conclusion that finding a creative space for women in the music industry, where they are not exploited or insulted, is rare to impossible. The female musicians who proclaim themselves as feminists discover an uneasy path between being an advocate and still allowing themselves creative

license and freedom. The comments one scrolls through after watching a YouTube video of a woman performing are appalling, and are enough to transform even the most hardcore badasses into shrinking violets (see the Guardian piece by CHVRCHES frontwoman / TYCI co-founder Lauren Mayberry). So when an artist says the three magical words "I'm a feminist" - or some variation on that theme - I feel ready to burst with happiness.

In a recent interview with the Daily Beast, Este commented that people don't know how to perceive strong women, and the scorn that accompanies the word feminist. "Fuck off," she asserted. It was like music to my ears. As soon as the article was released online, the Tumblr Haim fandom rejoiced - it was the closest the band had ever come to explicitly identifying as feminists. It was a cause for celebration of sorts. The Haim fans whose blogs I avidly followed were young women who called out patriarchal and sexist bullshit, and they all hailed Este's quote as a major breakthrough. "This is the closest she's come to self-identifying as a feminist," a fellow feminist blogger proclaimed. "I'll take it!" I was similarly elated…

There are as many iterations of feminism as there are individuals. I consider myself an intersectional choice feminist - or at least that's what my gender studies professor seemed to think was a fitting title. The Western feminism that only caters to upper-middle-class white women (like myself) is wholly unsatisfying to me. What if my

icons practice a completely different feminism than me? I have always viewed feminism as a movement that attempts to dismantle systems that tell women they constantly need validation and male acceptance. Yet I often find myself needing validation for my own feminism. It all comes down to the politics of representation. If the adage is that you can't be what you can't see, I suppose that hearing someone drop the feminism revelation in an interview makes me a little bit more hopeful about my own future...

I was constantly confronted with eye-rolls and sighs when I told my high school classmates that I was a feminist. As a college student who is lucky enough to attend a historically feminist institution, I worry that my feminist ideals won't be tolerated when I am confronted with the 'real' world. These women confronted the same stereotypes, and are actively fighting for new roles in the media, in music, and in everyday life. That makes me their feminist fangirl.

THIS IS AN EXCERPT. TO READ THE FULL ARTICLE (AND TYCI'S VERY OWN INTERVIEW WITH HAIM!), VISIT TYCI.ORG.UK. FOR MORE OF NELLIE'S FAN-GIRLING, HEAD TO LOW-ON-KNOW-HOW.TUMBLR.COM.

TYCI LIVE

FREE ALL NIGHT IF YOU WRITE TYCI ON YOUR KNUCKLES

OUR JULY EVENT SEES VANCOUVER INDIE POP OUTFIT **THEE AHS** PLAYING LIVE ALONGSIDE A DJ SET FROM **NATASHA RADICAL (PELTS)**.

SATURDAY 19 JULY
11PM TILL 3AM
BLOC, 117 BATH STREET, GLASGOW
FREE BEFORE MIDNIGHT; 2 POUNDS AFTER

PROCEEDS FROM JULY'S RAFFLE WILL GO TO
THE WOMEN'S SUPPORT PROJECT (SCOTTISH CHARITY)

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The latest episode of the TYCI podcast is online now and can be found at soundcloud.com/tyciblog. Our next Subcity show will be Thursday 17 July, 5 - 7pm. Tune in at subcity.org/shows/tyci.

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TYCI is a collective run by women.

We have a website where we write about things which affect us and put together features on art, theatre, music, film, politics, current affairs and most things in between. We also talk about similar stuff on our monthly podcasts and radio show on Subcity.

This zine is a collection of some of the content from our site and is distributed in conjunction with our monthly live events.

If you would like to get involved, reply to any of our articles or just generally say hi, hit us up on contact.tyci@gmail.com or visit tyci.org.uk.

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